



City of Arlington 2004 The Year In Review

Fiscal Policy

Fiscal Year Budget Funds Core Services, Compensation and Career Development

The Fiscal Year 2005 budget will fund the core services and programs that Arlington residents depend upon everyday. The \$173.9 million budget modestly reduces the structural imbalance while addressing a number of City Council priorities such as core service delivery, public health, safety and competitive pay for employees. These priorities were funded without a property tax increase.

Voters Approve Economic Development Opportunities in Popular City Park

Seventy-two percent of the voters, who went to the polls in May 2004, voted “yes” to Proposition I. The Proposition paves the way for economic development opportunities at one of the city’s largest family parks. Arlington voters were asked to authorize to use park land economic development opportunities on up to seven acres of land at the Harold Patterson Sports Complex in south Arlington. The move will enhance the appeal of the park. The revenues associated with the lease or sale of this land will be invested in capital maintenance at the sports center.

The Bid for Competitive Services Continues in 2004

The City’s Competitive Services Program continues to identify opportunities within the organization to provide high quality services at the lowest possible cost to citizens and taxpayers. The program’s goal is to ensure municipal programs and services are efficient and effective and that performance is properly measured and continuous improvement is sustained. In 2004, the following initiatives were accomplished:

- The Arlington Sanitary Landfill was identified as a competitive services initiative in 2004. A request for proposals for lease and operation of the landfill was issued in August 2004. This initiative is estimated to provide additional revenue for the City’s general fund.
- The first year of the contractual agreement with First Vehicle Services to provide maintenance for the City’s fleet vehicles has been a success. This represented a major transition in an area critical to the operation of the City. The second year of the contract will address increased efforts to facilitate improved communications between the contractor and user departments and efforts to foster a greater sense of customer service throughout vehicle procurement and maintenance operations.
- The City of Arlington Finance and Human Resources Departments will soon share a new information technology system with Grand Prairie, Carrollton and the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Implementation is scheduled to begin in November 2004 and be completed by January 2006.

Fiscal Policy

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- As part of the competitive services program, a number of re-engineering initiatives were identified in 2004 in the Department of Planning and Development Services. Redesign of the plat and plan review processes were recommended to increase efficiency and customer service effectiveness. Acquisition of automated permit tracking software was identified to improve the building permit process and a study of third-party organization started in 2004 and will be implemented in 2005.
- Survey Division outsourcing in the Department of Public Works was studied this year. Six positions were identified for outsourcing. Three positions will be retained to provide internal service to City departments. The reduction in staff is expected to result in an estimated savings of \$80,000 - \$125,000 a year. The Inspections Division, also located in the Department of Public Works, is responsible for the inspection of construction materials and workmanship primarily for paving, drainage, water and sanitary sewer. The department conducted a competitive assessment, determining that these services were not commonly provided in the marketplace and that defining standards and accountability for vendors could be difficult. As a result, the Public Works Department will retain the inspection function and focus on re-engineering and improving services.

City Authorizes Fiscal Impact Study on Proposed Cowboys Stadium in Arlington

Los Angeles-based Economics Research Associates was retained to conduct an economic and fiscal impact study of a Dallas Cowboys Stadium in Arlington. The results of the study were used to help the city determine whether a mutually beneficial agreement could be reached and submitted to Arlington voters. ERA is an international consulting firm that conducts economic analysis for the entertainment and tourism industry. The study was estimated to cost approximately \$25,000. The Dallas Cowboys has agreed to reimburse the city up to \$50,000 for costs associated with the study, due diligence and any related expenditures. The Arlington City Council approved an ordinance calling a special municipal election for November 2. On November 2, voters overwhelmingly approved a new stadium for the Dallas Cowboys in Arlington.

Energy Savings Program Improves Traffic Safety and Reduces Energy Costs

The final phase of a traffic safety program, initiated by Public Works and designed to reduce long-term energy and maintenance costs, was completed in 2004. Contractors replaced incandescent bulbs in about 11,800 traffic lights at 243 intersections throughout the city this year. This change is estimated to reduce energy costs by as much as 85-90 percent. The cost savings is estimated to be about \$259,000 a year.



Regional Policy

New Trinity Trail Connects Arlington with Fort Worth and Grand Prairie

A new regional trail connection between Fort Worth and Grand Prairie was completed this year. Representatives from the state, county and region joined the City of Arlington and River Legacy Foundation to celebrate the opening of the Trinity River Trail. The \$2.4 million project completes eight miles of trail along the Trinity River from the Arlington/Fort Worth to the Arlington/Grand Prairie borders.

Arlington City Council Holds Joint Meetings with Fort Worth, Grand Prairie

Revitalization, economic development and tourism were among agenda items discussed in 2004 when the Arlington City Council held joint meetings with the City Councils of Fort Worth and Grand Prairie. The meetings were an initial step in the City's quest for true regional cooperation with neighboring cities in the Metroplex. The meetings were open to the public and rebroadcast on the City 5 cable channel.

Major Funding Secured for Interstate 30 Three Bridges Corridor

Funding in the amount of \$258 million was awarded this year for the Three Bridges Corridor, a project expected to dramatically improve traffic flow and access opportunities of Interstate 30 in Arlington. The project boundary extends from immediately west of the Ballpark Way bridge to west of the Cooper Street bridge. The improvements will include the provision of additional freeway lanes, two new bridges, two replacement bridges, Texas U-turns and an HOV lane. The changes are also estimated to spur new economic development and redevelopment in areas where growth has been historically restricted by access limitations. This stretch of I-30 is a gateway to destinations such as Six Flags Over Texas, the Amerquest Field, the Arlington Convention Center, central Arlington, River Legacy Parks, and the University of Texas at Arlington.

City Takes Lead Role in Air Quality

The Arlington City Council signed a resolution this year in support of its commitment to clean air and in June 2004, the City completed its Air Quality Operational and Fiscal Impact Analysis. The North Texas Region, which includes Dallas, Tarrant, Denton and Collins counties, has not yet made the federal, one-hour standard for air quality. The City of Arlington is assisting the North Texas Region in attaining federal clean air standards for ozone by reducing emissions from its diesel-fueled vehicles and equipment and by incorporating further energy efficiency measure in its buildings and facilities.

City Participation in Regional Transportation Initiatives Expands

A part of the Regional Rail Corridor Study process is to identify a feasible regional institutional structure for seamless public transportation in North Texas. The City of Arlington continues its participation on a number of policy and technical committees and task forces studying regional transportation. This effort is being led by the North Central Texas Council of Government.



Community and Neighborhood Development

Crime Drops 7.8 Percent

Increased police presence and more community involvement are two primary factors that contributed to a reduction in crime in 2003. According to FBI crime data released in October, 2004, Arlington's crime dropped 7.8 percent in 2003 compared with a 0.5 percent decline nationally. Violent crime, which includes murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault, fell 15 percent last year. Property crime, which includes burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft, fell 7 percent. Between 2001 and 2002, Arlington hired 70 new police officers. The crime index, which is the number of crimes per 10,000 persons, also fell 9.7 percent, from 680 in 2002 to 614 in 2003.

More than \$8.6 million in Sales Tax Dollars at Work on City Streets

Construction was substantially completed this year on approximately 240 residential and arterial streets. Work included mill and overlay, micro-surfacing and reconstruction. This work was funded from the City's street sales tax program and is administered by the Public Works Department. This compares with last year's expenditure of approximately \$6.7 million, of which \$970,000 was the balance of the street maintenance fee revenue.

Largest Branch Library in City Opens for Business

The City of Arlington opened its fifth and largest branch library this year. During the first 11 months of business, the Southeast Branch Library checked out 318,553 items and issue 7,709 new library cards. The Southeast Branch Library continues to be one of the city's busiest libraries and is located at 900 Southeast Green Oaks Boulevard, south of Interstate 20.

New Public Safety Center Opens in West Arlington

The City of Arlington held a grand opening dedication for the new West Arlington Police Service Center. The new police facility is located at 2060 W. Green Oaks Blvd. and is open 24 hours a day. Its presence enhances efforts to improve law enforcement services and build opportunities for more community partnerships on the west side of the city, which has about 160,000 residents and includes the Parks at Arlington Mall and the Interstate 20 corridor. The Department of Neighborhood Services offers a number of services and programs in the center. The \$3.5 million public safety facility was funded with bond funds approved by Arlington voters in 1999.

\$8.8 Million in Improvements on North Cooper Street Completed

The North Cooper Street Improvements Project was completed during the fiscal year. Cooper Street, from Abram Street to Interstate 30, has been widened to six lanes. The \$8.8 million project included railroad crossing upgrades, street lighting, landscaping and underground water and sanitary sewer improvements. Cooper Street is one the city's busiest north and southbound thoroughfares.

Community and Neighborhood Development

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New Citizens Policy Review Committee Studies Code Enforcement

The new Citizens' Policy Review Committee was formed this year. The committee spent 10 weeks conducting a comprehensive review of the City's code enforcement policies and procedures. The CPRC concluded that the City's code enforcement program is effective and efficient and forwarded more than 15 recommendations designed to further enhance livability in the community.

Equipment Upgrades to Improve Emergency Communications

This year, the City Council authorized a contract with Motorola, Inc. for the purchase of \$761,143 in equipment to upgrade the City's radio system. Dispatch consoles were upgraded and wireless data management software and additional radio transmitters and receivers were purchased. Voters authorized \$1.4 million for the purchase of upgraded equipment for Dispatch Services in the 2003 Bond Election. Additionally, \$87,257 was spent this year to purchase a voice recorder system to be used for recording 9-1-1 emergency and administrative calls and public safety radio transmissions. The existing voice recorder system was purchased in 1997.

New Community Park Serves Southeast Arlington

A new 144-acre community park was opened in 2004. The Webb Community Park is located at Mansfield Webb Road and Webb Ferrell Road. It is named for the historic community of Webb, a 19th century settlement in the southeast part of the city. Phase I, which includes the purchase of land, was made possible by a \$500,000 grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and approximately \$1.6 million from park fees. Arlington voters authorized another \$1.2 million for the new park in the 1997 Park Bond Election.



Economic Development

Citizens Share Common Themes, Ideas for Downtown Redevelopment

The Downtown Arlington Unified Master Plan was unveiled this year. The City of Arlington hired nationally recognized planning consultant John Fregonese to unify previous downtown land use plans and small area planning documents. A series of workshops and open house events gave Arlington residents opportunities to help develop common themes, unique ideas and guiding principles for the redevelopment of downtown Arlington. The Unified Master Plan for downtown Arlington is scheduled for council approval later this year.

City and Dallas Cowboys Reach Agreement/Voter Authorize New Stadium

The City Council and City staff worked with the Dallas Cowboys Football Club to develop a Master Agreement for a new Stadium in Arlington. On Tuesday, Nov. 2, Arlington voters overwhelmingly approved an increase in three taxes to fund an air-conditioned stadium with a retractable roof. The City of Arlington will pay half or \$325 million to build the stadium. Site preparation is scheduled begin in 2005 followed by construction in 2006. The Dallas Cowboys expect to play their first home game in the new stadium in the fall 2009.

Arlington Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Success Stories

In 2004, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce helped to create approximately 6,271 new jobs in the city with a capital investment estimated to be about \$1.15 billion.

Here are some of economic development highlights from the year:

- The City worked with the Arlington Chamber to secure \$258 million in funding for the Three Bridges Corridor, which is estimated to spur new economic development and redevelopment of areas along Interstate 30 where growth has been historically restricted by access limitations.
- Redevelopment efforts are under way at the North Collins Street/Randol Mill Road Corridor. The addition of a new \$1.5 million in construction value Walgreens retail store is estimated to create approximately 30 new jobs. An estimated \$14 million in construction value will demolish and replace a vacant K-mart building with a 188,000 square foot Wal-Mart Supercenter.
- The General Motors Assembly Plant retooled and expanded its manufacturing operations this year. The \$162 million project adds a new line of sport utility vehicles. The facility will retain about 3,000 existing jobs. General Motors remains one of Arlington's largest employers.

Economic Development

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- Hotels.com leased 56,000 square feet of space in the Brookhollow Office Development Complex on Lamar Boulevard in north Arlington. The Dallas-based company will create about 700 new jobs.
- The Crown Corporation announced the relocation and expansion of its leasing and service center to Arlington, bringing 110 new jobs and a \$3.5 million capital investment to the Interstate 20 corridor.
- The Chamber of Commerce formed the Mobility Issues Task Force this year to study and address transportation initiatives in the city. The Chamber is also working with the Office of the Mayor and Council on an initiative that creates a Tarrant County Transportation Coalition, which will focus its efforts on securing resources for transportation infrastructure within the county.

Local Convention and Tourism Rebounds in 2004

Convention and tourism are up in Arlington, as the national economy/travel industry continues to rebound from the terrorist attacks of September 11. According to the Arlington Convention and Visitors Bureau, the hotel occupancy rate in Arlington increased 3.7 percent in 2004. The hotel occupancy rate was steady at 60 percent in 2004, compared to 57 percent in 2003 and 61.5 percent in 2002. The number of hotel bookings increased 26 percent in 2004 from 68,679 rooms in 2003 to 92,488 rooms in 2004.



Municipal Policy

Attracting and Retaining a Skilled Workforce is Priority

The ability to attract and retain skilled employees was an organizational priority in 2004. The FY 2005 budget funded \$150,000 for employee training and career development opportunities. Additionally, a five percent one-time payment and 1.36 percent compensation increase for employees was approved.

Comprehensive Management Study Completed

A comprehensive management study of the Police Department was completed this year. The study included 43 recommendations and 39 have been implemented. The recommendations save the City approximately \$576,000 annually. The study prompted a renewed focus in 2004 on strategic planning and visioning for the department. The goal is to create safer neighborhoods, a higher level of service and more effective community partnerships.

New Municipal Court System Nears Implementation

A new automated court system is nearing its final phase of implementation. The new system replaces an antiquated mainframe computer system, which has struggled to meet the technology demands of the Arlington Municipal Court. The new system will allow court documents to be stored electronically. It will also automate the citation process and allow customers to make payments via the Internet and telephone. The Arlington Municipal Court also extended its customer service hours this year and added new Saturday service.

City Improves Communication Technology with New E-mail System

The Information Technology Department completed its transition to the Outlook e-mail system in 2004. The change results in better integration with other Microsoft products already in use and lays the foundation for more enhancements in communication technology for the City.

New Administrative Services Department is Created

In a move that consolidates similar functions, capitalizes on knowledge management and enhances communication on special initiatives with citywide impact, a new Administrative Services Department was formed in 2004. The Office of Communication was combined with General Services, the City Secretary's Office and the administrative support functions of the City Manager's Office and Office of the Mayor and City Council.

City Helps to Create a Voter-Friendly Environment at Polls

The May Arlington City Council election presented an opportunity for citizens to exercise their right to vote in a more voter-friendly environment. For the first time in Arlington, Vietnamese-speaking election clerks joined Spanish-speaking election clerks at the polls to assist voters whose primary language is not English. The changes have been supported by a number of minority groups in the city. Bilingual Election Clerks were also available to assist voters during Early Voting and on Election Day in November.

Municipal Policy

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Workforce Investment Plan Created

Replacing and retaining talent will become more challenging in the next decade due to changing workforce demographics. A workforce investment plan has been created to prepare for the vacuum of knowledge, institutional memory and leadership that will result from pending retirements. The investment plan addresses the organization's human resource practices ranging from employee entry and assimilation through ongoing development to successful achievement and retirement. A leadership academy, re-designed employee orientation and educational assistance programs are among the first to be initiated.

Health Benefit moves toward Consumer Driven Design

Several actions mark the beginning of a phased approach to consumer driven healthcare. An alternate plan design was created for plan year 2005 that includes a deductible and places first dollar spending decisions on the consumer. A strategic focus on wellness was confirmed with an established budget and a COA Benefit and Wellness event as a kick-off to open enrollment. Employee and retiree education was enhanced through the implementation of *The HR Update*, a newsletter through which topical information will be routinely shared.

Addressing the City's Future Unfunded Health Benefit Liability

Two adjustments were made for FY 2005 that specifically reduce the City's unfunded Health Benefit liability. An alternative health plan design offered through AARP became available in 2005 for retirees over 65 years of age. In time, this will reduce the number of retirees on the City's health plan. The second adjustment, the parameters defining eligibility for a subsidized retirement health benefit, were changed for employees with less than five years of service beginning January 1, 2005. These employees must be 55 years of age and have 15 years of COA service to be eligible.



Honors and Awards

Fire Department is State's Top First-Responder

The Arlington Fire Department was recognized this year as the state's top first-responder organization for emergency medical services. The First-Responder Award was presented by the Texas Department of Health during the annual Texas Emergency Medical Services Conference in San Antonio. The award recognizes excellence in patient care, public access, medical control, disaster preparedness, public education and training.

Dispatch Services is Awarded National Accreditation

City of Arlington Dispatch Services Division has become the second public safety communications agency in Texas to earn national accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. Arlington Dispatch Services is among approximately 30 communications centers in the nation to successfully complete the accreditation program, which is designed to improve the delivery of law enforcement services. Arlington Dispatch Services answers 9-1-1 calls for emergency services and dispatches calls for police, fire and contracted emergency medical services.

Arlington Drinking Water is Among Best in Country

The quality of drinking water in Arlington earned a high rating from a national men's health magazine this year. According to a report published in the March 2004 Men's Health Magazine, the City of Arlington was the only municipality in Texas to earn to an A rating. It was only one of 12 cities in the country.

Purchasing Division Earns National Recognition

The City of Arlington Purchasing Division was presented the 2004 Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award, which is sponsored annually by a consortium of national purchasing agencies. The Purchasing Division is responsible for procuring most City of Arlington services and supplies. The award recognizes excellence in public and nonprofit procurement and is a first for the City of Arlington.

City Attorney's Office Leads Nation in IMLA Fellows

Two City Attorneys earned 2004 Local Government Fellow designations from the International Municipal Lawyers Association. Elizabeth Lutton and Teris Solis accepted the awards in October. The Arlington City Attorney's Office has more IMLA Fellows than any other IMLA member law office in the U.S. and Canada.

Housing Authority Earns High Ratings from HUD

The Arlington Housing Authority earned a high performance rating from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The rating was issued after a thorough review by HUD officials of Arlington's housing policies and procedures.

Tierra Verde Golf Club is Among Magazine's Best

The Tierra Verde Golf Club was selected the Best Public Golf Course in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex by *Avid Golfer Magazine*. The magazine also gave the golf course a number one ranking in its Best Municipal Golf Course category. Tierra Verde ranked third in the category of Best Practice Facilities.

Honors and Awards

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Building Inspections Wins TML Municipal Excellence Award

The City of Arlington Building Inspections Division received the 2003 Municipal Excellence Award from the Texas Municipal League. The award recognized the division's communications efforts with contractors about new state and local laws and policies

Tennis Pro Nets National Certification

Arlington Tennis Center teaching professional Angel Martinez earned the second highest certification rating from the United States Professional Tennis Association. Martinez becomes the Tennis Center's fourth professional to hold this rating.

